

Playing House

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Playing House

by [QueenofBabble](#)

Summary

It was supposed to be a standard mission. Break into the Galra base, steal some information, release some prisoners and head back to the Castle-- no muss no fuss. Pidge and Keith were never meant to end up here.

I

“Alright guys, we destroy this base,” Shiro’s calm voice filtered through the Team’s headsets, “and Zarkon’s last line of defense in this quadrant is gone.”

It’s a strange beat, too many emotions flooding through their shared connection just at the back of Voltron’s consciousness. Hope, fear, excitement, nervousness, confusion, all in a whirl. It’s been years since they were first carried off into a distant galaxy by a sentient alien space ship. Since they’d been home, if Earth could be considered home anymore. Each mission they were closer to ending the Galra Empire’s reign, but there was one huge unanswered question hanging overhead: *and then what?*

At the moment Team Voltron had one clear goal, defeat Zarkon and liberate the known universe from his control. Once they completed that goal, if they completed that goal, where did that leave the Paladins? The Princess who championed the mission with no home planet of her own? The millions who had been under the Galra’s influence for so long they didn’t know what a life without authoritarian rule was like?

Team Voltron was getting so close and it was utterly terrifying.

“You know the deal,” Shiro said. “Keith, Pidge you sneak in grab any valuable intel, release any prisoners, and get out. Lance, Hunk, and I will cover you from out here.”

The command was familiar. Pidge was always tasked with the responsibility of dealing with strange alien devices, the quickest to adapt to foreign technology. This, however, put the green paladin into a precarious position. While Pidge was perfectly capable of taking care of herself, it would be hard for anyone to crack alien encryptions and watch their back at the same time. That’s where Keith came in. The intelligence Pidge collected had been invaluable to the Team’s continued success, making sending an essential piece of Voltron into the middle of enemy territory a necessary risk.

Allura and Shiro took every step possible to ensure that Pidge and the information were protected. There was no one Shiro trusted more than Keith. Keith was skilled, direct, and most importantly dedicated to his team making him the perfect choice in their leader’s eye.

“You got it.” Pidge said.

“On it.” Keith said, directing the Red Lion towards the rendezvous point. Pidge was close behind in the Green Lion.

It’s typical procedure at this point, most of the Galra bases have the same design, making breaking in and out a breeze once you’ve done it a few times. Granted sneaking into enemy territory is always risky and getting cocky can get you killed, but it’s become a well honed skill for Pidge and Keith.

They reach the control room without a problem. Pidge set to work downloading all available information. She briefly scanned for anything about human prisoners as the text flies past and

makes sure not to alert the main system of the unauthorized dump. Maybe it's the dull purple glow of Galra tech, but this download feels particularly slow.

"So, who do you think is gonna get to punch Zarkon first when we bust his empire right open?" Pidge asked, fingers drumming against metal.

"What?" Keith said continuing to watch the doorway for any sign of trouble. It's an odd question, but Keith has never been able to completely peg Pidge, can never pin down what goes through her mind the way he can with Shiro, Lance, Hunk, or Allura.

"I'm just trying to make some small talk." The drumming stops for a tick before continuing again and the computer makes a short beep.

Keith thinks about the question for a second. They all have beef with Zarkon, all have a reason for wanting to see him overthrown and long forgotten. "Oh well, I think Allura, Coran, and Shiro get first dibs," Keith said. The three of them had probably lost the most because of the emperor.

"Fair enough." Pidge said as she unplugged her equipment from the system. "We'll make a roster. Take turns." She moves away coming to stand in the doorway with Keith.

"Bit morbid." Keith noted bayard lowering the tiniest bit as they head out towards the cells.

"So's fighting in a war." Pidge said.

They evade the Galra patrol with little trouble, navigating the hallways quickly. They are only a few yards away from the cells when an alarm sounds. *Impossible*, Keith thinks, there is no way any guard saw them. Pidge had triple checked that the bases cameras were on an undetectable loop.

They have to move, getting caught would be a disaster. It's a necessary sacrifice, but they can come back with the rest of the Team to get the prisoners later. The priority is delivering the information and themselves scathe free back to the castle.

Keith grabs on to Pidge's hand, turning about face and pulling the smaller woman with him. She matches his pace well, their feet pounding in sync on the metal floors and bayards poised and ready to strike, as they wind back through the base.

Something is coming up behind them Keith can hear it over the beating of her heart in his ears. For the slightest second Keith hesitates to glance over his shoulder. The only this he sees is purple before he hits the ground, and hears Pidge fall down next to him.

Pidge wakes up with a start, eyes shooting open to a cream colored ceiling. It doesn't make sense. If she expected anything, it was grey metal walls of a spaceship, be it the Castle of Lions or a Galra cell. What was also weird was the soft cushioning underneath her. She had never felt anything like it. As her consciousness grew Pidge felt a stream of hot air push across her neck. Pidge shivered, noting the pair of arms wrapped firmly around her middle. .that was not okay. She turned her head to see a mop of black hair.

Pidge screamed. She pushed the arms off her and rolled off the bed. She straightened up as she cased the room and looked for a weapon. Three doorways, two bedside tables, a dresser, two windows, she could figure something out. In her frenzy she picked up an alarm clock from the bedside table, holding it up ready to smash it down at any second.

The head popped up then, whipping towards the commotion. Pidge instantly knew that stupidly pretty face-- Keith.

Keith looked utterly confused as he sat up, blinking rapidly. He had never seen this place or anything like it before, everything was discomfitingly unfamiliar. The only thing resembling familiarity was-- "Pidge?" he said.

"Keith?!" Pidge exclaimed. Her grip on the alarm clock loosened as she placed it gently back on the bedside table a blush rising on her cheeks, her body still wracked with tension. It was certainly weird to wake up with Keith wrapped around her, but at least she knew she could trust him.

"Where are we?" Keith asked, taking another glance around at, what he assumed, was a typical master bedroom neutral colors and all.

"I don't- I just woke up," Pidge said. "Why are you in my bed? Or why was I in your bed? Our bed? I mean why would we even be sharing a bed? It's not- we're not- are-"

Keith cut off her worried rambling, "I don't know either, but I'm gonna find out."

Determined, Keith threw the plush sheets aside and stepped out of bed. Pidge was struck still as she took the man in. His dark hair was longer than she remembered now brushing past his shoulders as he stood in all his tight t-shirt and boxer-brief clad glory. Sure, she had seen him shirtless before, seen all the Paladins at one point or another, but this was different. This was intimate.

Curious, Pidge looked down at herself taking in the pastel colored striped shorts, oversized t-shirt, and mismatched socks. It was all very domestic and it was seriously weirding her out.

Keith stalked over to the blinds. He pulled them up swiftly letting in a flood of crisp white morning light. Pidge blinked as she came up behind him to peer out. It looked like a normal suburban neighborhood, a lot like the one Pidge remembered growing up in near the Galaxy Garrison headquarters.

"Earth." Pidge said in astonishment staring out at the contemporary and mediterranean style houses across the street and beyond. A swirl of emotions welled up inside her, nostalgia, grief, longing, comfort, in seeing such familiar structures from what felt like a lifetime ago. Whatever this was, a simulation, a dream, or nightmare, it was messing with Pidge and she did not like it one bit.

"How did we end up on Earth?" Keith asked, pulling the blinds back down. He turned away from the window to face Pidge, her lips pressed tight together and eyes glazed over. Keith was sure he didn't look much better.

He could hardly believe it. He had been working almost his entire life to get off Earth, to explore the vast universe, to find a home. He had thought he had found one on the Castle of Lions with Shiro and the rest of the Paladins, with Coran and Allura. He had a place where he was needed and cared for, a place he belonged. On Earth he was nothing more than a troubled orphan eventually cast out of the one place he might have fit in.

“How should I know?” Pidge shot back, crossing her arms under her chest. “At least we know where we are, for the most part I guess. I think a better question is *when* are we?”

“When?” Keith questioned.

Pidge nearly rolled her eyes. “Yeah, when. You’re hair is longer,” she said gesturing to the full black locks, “you have a five o’clock shadow, and you’re also missing like 10 pounds of muscle.”

Keith looked down at himself offended at the notion. He was at the top of his game, the best shape he’d ever been in thank you very much. He felt a tinge of anger spark inside him as he spoke “You’re one to talk, you have old lady bangs-”

“Excuse you, I do not-”

“You do.” Pidge moved from the window to look in the large mirror above the dresser. And oh god it’s true- she’s got a thick set of blunt full across bangs along with a thick messy ponytail. She looks almost like her teenaged self, with just a slightly more feminine frame and a thinner face. The image is jarring to say the least. The last time Pidge looked in a mirror her hair just brushed the top of her shoulder in a cut practical for wearing a helmet most days and her face was half-hidden behind her brother’s thick rimmed glasses that she didn’t need.

Pidge lets out an annoyed huff, “Well you’re old now too, hotshot.”

Keith comes over to stand next to her and takes in the reflected image. He leans in a moment (staring at what Pidge can’t tell) before pulling away, “This is weird.”

“Agreed,” Pidge said. The vaguely familiar people staring back from the mirror are slightly off putting, but Pidge can’t stop the traitorous thought, *we look pretty good together* .

Keith stepped away from the mirror. She couldn’t tell exactly how old she was now, somewhere in the range of little less than thirty if she had to guess, but she still felt like her normal twenty year old self. She certainly only had the knowledge and memories of twenty year old Pidge.

An awkward silence overtook the room then. Pidge fidgeted as she felt Keith’s gaze shift from the mirror and onto her. She needed to do something, anything to get her mind off of the endless questions swirling in her mind. She needed answers. If older Pidge was anything like regular Pidge, she had a journal.

Keith could tell Pidge was freaking out and he was too. None of this was supposed to be happening. Right now they were supposed to be participating in an intergalactic war with an

evil alien empire. Everything inside Keith shouted at him that he should be fighting, not staring at his teammate in what was possibly their bedroom in a house they may or may not own on Earth.

Keith suddenly felt hot all over, a wave of heavy heat washing over him and leaving him a little dizzy. He needed to sit down and clear his head. Keith carefully put one foot in front of the other until he reached the bed and carefully set himself down. Feet firmly pressing into the carpet Keith concentrated on taking even breaths in something almost like meditation, taking the edge off.

Pidge pulled open one of the top dresser drawers and started rifling through. She looked underneath the neat piles of underwear and socks, finding nothing. Pidge continued moving from drawer to drawer of the dresser lifting up the various clothing inside, only finding some jewelry boxes and packages of condoms she dropped quickly back underneath the socks. Slamming the last drawer closed Pidge turned around in search of some place else to look. She saw Keith sitting on the bed hands clasped tight into fists and face like stone.

Their eyes met, amber locking onto steel grey and both felt something like a jolt of electricity pass between them. It wasn't entirely unusual. Paladin training did include a lot of staring into your team members' eyes and prying into their minds. During a few sessions Pidge had felt pulled to Keith by a force larger than herself, though she couldn't explain why. Keith remembered feeling the odd urge to move closer surfacing in the past during mind melds.

A sense of comfort flowed between the paladins now. While everything else around them was different, their eyes had remained the same. Keith felt the dizziness clear away, replaced with the steadfast resolve to make sure he and Pidge got back to their team. The uneasiness plaguing Pidge seemed to stop, feet settling firmly beneath her. She could figure this out calmly. It was as if they had both found the steadiness they needed.

Keith's lips upturned the slightest bit and he tilted his head motioning for her to come sit next to him. The tension that had steadily been building since they woke up completely ebbed away as Pidge came back to bed. She curled her feet underneath her as she sat beside him, a few inches away.

"So what's the last thing you remember?" Keith said shifting a bit to face Pidge.

"Being on one of the Galra ships. The last in the quadrant. We were supposed to be releasing prisoners," Pidge said. "But we tripped something, somewhere along the way, narrowly got away when we were blasted with something."

"Haggar. The druids." It's the logical assumption for Keith, what else on a Galra ship would have the ability to send them through time and space.

"Possibly, maybe one of the sentries or it could have been a soldier. Or some weird cosmic ray of light sent by the powers that be." Pidge added not ready to rule anything out. Between traveling through a wormhole and discovering aliens really do exist, anything was possible.

Keith pushed a hand through his hair and off his face, fingers getting slightly tangled in the ends of the strands. "Look," he said, "I don't know how any of this is possible, or if it's even

real, but Pidge, we're gonna make it back if it's the last thing I do."

"Hey," Pidge said, clasping one of Keith's hands with her own. Shiny metal glinting on their ring fingers. "We're in this together all right? Don't go saying stupid things like that."

Keith stared down at their hands. It felt good having Pidge here beside him. If anyone would be able to work this thing out it would be them. "Yeah."

The moment was broken as a click was heard and the bedroom door swung open. Pidge dropped Keith's hand immediately and both turned to look at what threat might be looming.

Standing not five feet from them is a little girl. "Mommy you didn't come wake me up," the girl said sullenly, pink mouth pressed in a little pout.

"Excuse me?" Pidge said eyes widening. She could recognize being on Earth, could understand how somehow she ended up living with and most likely marrying Keith in some alternate reality as strange as it may seem. What she can't comprehend is the child in front of her.

The little girl had fluffy brown hair similar in color to Pidge's own, maybe a shade or two darker, tied in pigtails and grey eyes that shone as she stared up at her expectantly. Pidge couldn't seem to speak. Her mouth open and closed refusing to produce a sound, it was as if her brain had short circuited seeing the child.

"Mommy?" the girl questioned quietly as she came closer reaching a hand out. Pidge recoiled.

The pout quickly turned into a frown. The little girl was dressed in simple purple pj's and her hair bounced as she turned towards Keith hoping to get different reaction. "Daddy why is Mommy acting silly?"

Keith stared at the kid. A look of almost wonder on his face.

When Keith had thought of the future he had never pictured a child. If anyone was unsuited to the needs of children it had to be him. It wasn't that he hated kids, how could he really? He knew what it was like to be helpless and not have anyone to care for you, to have to grow up too fast. "Who. . ." Keith said slowly, cautious.

"It's me Daddy," the little girl said her brows furrowing as recognition failed to show on Keith's face. "It's Kara." she said trying again, hands reaching out to pull on his shirt. Her eyes shining with tears. "Don't you remember me? Mommy?" She turned towards Pidge again her pleading becoming desperate. "We watch cartoons and play games together and you read to me before bed."

Keith couldn't take it. The devastation clearly taking over Kara hurt to watch. "No, no of course we remember you, Kara." Keith nearly stumbles over the name, "we were just. . . being silly?" It's not the smoothest recovery but it seems to stop the once imminent tears from falling.

“... Well it’s not funny.” Kara said. The tiny pout returns and she pushes her way up onto the bed to sit in between Keith and Pidge.

“You’re right.” Pidge said finally speaking up. “We tried being silly and instead we made you sad. Sorry.” The words are a bit forced, but Kara nods her head in response and leans forward to hug Pidge. Pidge keeps still this time feeling the warm weight of Kara press against her. Time slows for a second, just a second and Pidge let’s her arms come around the girl, giving a reassuring pat. It’s enough to make Kara smile.

“It’s okay,” Kara said pulling away from Pidge.

The three of them sit on the bed at peace. Then Kara fidgets restless, the mattress bouncing slightly, before she stating “I gotta go get dressed now.” She turned towards Keith, “Daddy you gotta come do my braids ‘cause you promised.”

“I did?” Keith raised an eyebrow in response. He could barely manage his own hair, now this kid wanted him to braid hers? Kara grabs his hand with hers and makes to get off the bed pulling Keith with her.

“Yeah, you promised, when I went to bed last night, so you have to.” Kara said as if it was the simplest thing, and heading towards the door.

Keith looked hesitantly at Pidge. “It’s alright,” she said, “ you go get her ready. I’m gonna have a look around. See if I can figure some things out.”

Pidge gives a nod encouraging him as Kara shakes Keith hand. “Come on!” Keith seems to breathe a little easier as he leave the room.

With Kara occupied, now it was time for Pidge to get some answers.

II

Chapter Notes

It's been a hot minute. Or hot couple of months actually. But inspiration struck and here we are. Hope you enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Keith hasn't met many kids, but he thinks Kara isn't half bad. She was smart and sweet, with all the excitement one would expect of an, as she reminded him, almost four year old. It also didn't hurt that she was darn cute.

Kara's room is a few doors down from the master bedroom. It's a quick trip leaving Keith little time to take in what he can. Some family photos on the wall, a staircase leading down to another level, a bathroom, all blurr by.

The bedroom was filled with toys, clothes, and books maybe too many for just one kid, but really what does he know about how many toys a kid should have. His favorite part of the room had to be the ceiling that was painted like the night sky. It reminded him of when he used to sit out on the roof of his shack just gazing up at the vast expanse of the universe.

Kara tugged on his hand, impatient now that he's stopped to stare. "Daddy!" she said stomping her little foot on the carpet.

Keith looked down subconsciously. When did he start answering to 'daddy'? "Right, uh, sorry. Let's get you dressed."

She pouts before yanking on his hand once again and leading him towards a closet. When Keith pulls it open his chest fills with something he doesn't quite understand. All he knows is that it feels good seeing rows of clothing for this little girl, that she has everything she could ever need and *he* helped to do that.

Kara picked out a slightly mismatched outfit after spending five minutes turning down every suggestion Keith made while she stared pensively into the jungle of clothing. Keith then helped her peak her head through the top and straightened the small skirt when it was twisted around her waist. She forgoes shoes, her toes wiggling as she laughs climbing on her bed.

Keith moves to sit behind her a brush and hair ties in hand. He vaguely remembers how to make a simple braid from the one summer his social worker had placed him in camp in an attempt to encourage Keith to make more friends. The teenaged counselor who organized the arts and crafts had taken a shine to him, teaching him how to make friendship bracelets during lunch when Keith was content to sit alone under a tree with his sandwich and Capri Sun.

It takes a few minutes but the final result isn't so bad. It's simple enough, braided pigtails, but the plaits are fairly neat and even. Kara looks pleased either way so Keith counts it as a small win in this weird new world.

"I want pancakes for breakfast." Kara demands.

And who is Keith to deny her, "Sure?"

"Really?!" Kara hops off the bed, her little feet searching for the floor. "Uncle Hunk makes the bestest pancakes ever, but I like mommy's too. Can mommy make them?" She looked up at Keith with those eyes again-- his eyes-- and he knew instantly he won't be saying no much while stuck here.

"I'll go ask her. Want to go play downstairs while I do?" Keith questioned standing up himself. If she's anything like he was she'll be off the second the idea is put in her head.

"Uh huh," Kara said with a nod. "I'm gonna be a chef."

And with that she's running out of the room and Keith can faintly hear the pitter patter of her making her way downstairs.

Keith finds Pidge sitting in the kitchen. It's large and fairly pristine, objects in their designated place with the exception of the island Pidge was seated at which had papers and objects strewn about it. Stainless steel appliances stood in between white cabinets and polished wood countertops. It was oddly rustic and charming, yet sleek with bright neutrals coloring the walls and backsplash. When Pidge had first walked in she wondered who had designed it because she was absolutely sure it wasn't her.

Pidge looked up to see Keith in the entryway. He was dressed for the day in black colored jeans and a henley, hair tied back into a ponytail and without Kara. The look suited him, much better than the 2008 style mullet in Pidge's humble opinion.

She'd changed too after Keith had left the bedroom. It had been overwhelming for a moment, to see all a closet full of options after having the choice between only a handful of outfits for about four years. Dresses, skirts, pants, sweaters, tank tops, blouses, she could hardly believe were really hers. Pidge's hands had grazed over the fabric feeling the different textures, nothing like the sleek strange fabrics of space but wholly welcoming. For a moment she had wanted to put on one of the many dresses, just for the simple pleasure of it. It had been so long since she had the chance. In the end she had decided against the dress and chose a pair of shorts and a light sweater. It was familiar; almost normal, like any other day.

"What happened to the kid?" Pidge asked taking a sip of orange juice from her glass. It stings her teeth a little but Pidge doesn't mind the slight ache. She couldn't remember the last time she actually had something to eat or drink that wasn't from a machine or foreign alien planet.

"She's playing," Keith said as he walked over and sat down next to her at the island a hint of a smile on his lips. "Chef apparently. Said she also wanted you to make pancakes even if they 'aren't as good as Uncle Hunk's.'"

Pidge immediately picks up on the name, an eyebrow quirking up but not openingly questioning. It's only more confirmation of what she's began piecing together.

Keith rested his elbow on the tabletop and let his face rest on his fist. He sneaked a glance at the laptop in front of Pidge and noted the homescreen background, a family photo featuring the two of them and Kara at the beach. He faintly wonders where they went to take that, but quickly pushes the thought away, "You find anything?"

"Oh, I found a lot of things." Pidge said with a smirk.

A moment of silence passes Keith expecting her to continue on. When she doesn't he prompts her gesturing with his free hand, "...Like?"

"Like we're *super married* ." Pidge said hitting the little photo icon on the laptop bringing up hundreds of little boxes on screen. Pixelated little moments of their lives in this universe all lined up in rows, organized by dates-- no doubt Pidge's doing-- for them to sift through. Clues in a giant puzzle. "As in there are at least a thousand photos on this computer alone and video too. Lovely little fall wedding by the way-- real sappy. You cried." She clicked on the folder marked ' Wedding Part One 5/24 ' scrolling to a picture of the ceremony featuring Keith obviously wiping away tears.

Keith made a face at the image brows furrowed and lips pursed. Pidge laughs at the constipated look on his face, "I know, it's freaky."

"I thought the married part was implied by the house and child," he states. Keith sat up straighter now glancing away from the screen to take in his teammate. At least someone was getting enjoyment out of this.

"That's positively fifties Keith." Pidge said voice raising an octave in mock offense. "We're the edgy generation, we don't abide by societal standards." She places a hand on her collar almost as if she's clutching invisible pearls.

Keith's suspicion had been rising since he entered the kitchen. *She's avoiding something*. It's a logical assessment. Sure Pidge plays around but not during a mission. She's always straight to the point, with an added dash of smartass comment sometimes, but hey, that's Pidge for you. Maybe he's still too ingrained with old procedures, and maybe they don't fit... whatever this is, but it's what he's good at. He'd think she would be too at this point. It's practically default by now, counting exits, analyzing, calculating every possibility and outcome. Pidge doesn't joke around like this on missions he knows her too well by now.

Keith frowned, "What are you hiding?"

Pidge's shoulders rose, body tensing up at being caught. If this were any other day she'd push up her glasses maybe even turn away, but there is no where to go here, or glasses to push. Instead she played with the bottom of her sweater, moving it up and down and playing with a stray string. She took a deep breath before she pushed out the words in a rush, "We're a little more screwed than I thought."

"How so?" Keith can roll with this, back to business.

“As in everything we know after my dad, Matt, and Shiro left for Kerberos, never happened. The mission went exactly as planned. The collected ice samples, studied the surface for three months, and came back in one piece.” Pidge pulled up a news article showing the three being welcomed back at the Garrison. “They never went missing, I went into the Garrison as Katie Holt, we never found the Blue Lion. We never found the Castle of Lions. We meet when I was assigned as your communications officer. I’m not even sure if Allura and Coran exist in this world. If the lions even do.”

“So what do we do? How do we fit here?” Keith said. She had obviously done her research in the time he’d spent with Kara.

“Apparently I work for the Garrison.” Even the word felt weird as Pidge said it, the Garrison had wiped her family away, had probably wiped them away too in another world. Working for them now? Feels practically like a betrayal for Pidge. Not that she’d let Keith see, her face is neutral as she spoke, like this was her everyday life, completely not strange.

“Freelance mostly. Plan out expeditions, keep their firewalls secure, monitor for unidentified interference.”

“Huh.” That about sums it up for Keith. He spoke up curious, did she know about him?

“What do I do?”

“You,” Pidge dragged out the word a little excited to spill this bit, “still ended up dropping out, I’m not exactly sure why. But apparently you write.”

“I write,” Keith said. It’s never what he pictured doing but he had always had elaborate dreams, maybe that played into it here.

“We still know Hunk and Lance though,” Pidge said. She shifted in her seat hands dropping away from her sweater, this is much easier to talk about. “They were in our wedding party. Along with Shiro and my brother. We have a surprising amount of friends and I only recognize a third of them.”

Keith’s head fell into his hands with an audible groan, “I think I have a headache.”

Pidge reached over to pat his head in a show of camaraderie then closed the laptop done with her examination of its contents... for now at least.

The kitchen was silent all but for the faint ticking of a mounted clock Pidge heard. Neither of them had anything else to say at the moment letting all the new information they obtained sink in. Many people in their lives were still the same that was good, Pidge thought working through it all, they knew them. What they didn’t know was how this reality’s Keith and Pidge (or maybe it was Katie here) acted around them. They were married after all. Were they lovey dovey? *Nah*, Pidge didn’t think either of them would be the public displays of affections type in any universe.

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She’s startled out of her musings by the chirping trill of the video phone. Pidge spotting one sitting on the counter gets up to grab it. She brings it back to the island glancing at Keith. A

moment of silent communication passed between them. Pidge raised an eyebrow, Keith's lips twisted in response, then her eyes widened before he shrugged. Without bothering to look at the caller ID Pidge pressed answer.

The hologram pops up projecting an image of Colleen Holt in all her glory. Pidge nearly fell over at the shock of it, not that she should be really. She'd seen her mother in photos on her computer a little older but much better looking than the one Pidge left behind for the Garrison, but well this; this was much different. Her eyes swelled up with tears she desperately tried to blink back. Keith is standing out of his chair now, Pidge doesn't know when that happened. She can't think about what's happening anymore when she heard *her mother speak* for the first time in years.

"Hi Katie! And Keith." Colleen's cheery voice rang from the speaker. "Is everything okay? Is Kara alright? You both look scared." Colleen's projection frowned, fine lines showing more prominently than they were a moment ago.

That's enough to shock Pidge out of her stupor. She shakes her head, a brilliant smile, one a guy could easily fall in love with and Keith has so rarely seen, crosses her face. "Yes, I mean no Mom everything here is fine. It's just good to see you."

Colleen laughs, "It's only been a day. Too busy for your mother at that barbecue yesterday." It would be an accusation from other mothers but there was not even a hint of malice in Colleen's voice, it's every bit of motherly good nature Pidge had so desperately missed and Keith had so desperately craved his entire life.

"Can't I still miss you?" Pidge bit her lip. She wanted to reach out and touch her but that would only mess with the projection.

"Of course you can," Colleen smiled, leave it to her daughter to be so sweet still, even as a grown adult. "I just wanted to remind you it's family dinner night at our place. Matt said you had a bit of a wild night and wasn't sure if you'd remember."

Keith cursed internally *shit*. A family dinner sounded perfect right about now to Pidge based on her face, but for him? He knew nothing about the Holts besides stray stories Pidge had been willing to offer up and little glimpses in her mind from melds.

Pidge's smile is still stuck on her face now, she can't stop. She gets to see them tonight, Matt, Mom, and Dad! "How could I forget? We'll be there at 5:30." Early Sunday dinners were tradition in the Holt family. She wonders idly if anyone else will be there.

Keith doesn't move a muscle. It's obvious this is a common occurrence and him raising a brow would be highly suspect. "Can't wait," he even managed to chime in.

"Perfect. You can tell me all about your night, I'm sure Kara has some stories to tell too." Colleen blows them a kiss and laughs. "See you soon. And Keith, don't forget you promised to help me in the kitchen tonight. Those bake sale cookies were no joke."

Keith's eyebrows did shoot up at that, just what had he been getting up to here?

“Bye!” Pidge called with wave as Colleen clicked disconnect.

“What the hell are we going to do?” Keith asked flopping back down onto his chair.

Pidge’s brows furrow, “What do you mean, we’re obviously going. That’s my family, we can’t just blow them off... it’ll be suspicious.”

He sighs, “But they don’t even know me.”

“They obviously do,” Pidge rolled her eyes. She’s ready to bite back when she stops noticing his posture; he’s nervous arms crossed, blocking himself off, “Look Keith, you can handle this, it’s just dinner and maybe it will help us. If not we’ll double our efforts tomorrow.” She grabs his hand stroking the surprisingly soft skin with her thumb. “Okay? We’ve got this.”

Keith’s heartbeat sped up at her touch, the heat of her hand warming him up and melting his opposition, he can’t say no to her. “Alright, I trust you.”

Pidge is ready to say more when Kara ran into the kitchen a paper chef hat on her head and too big apron like a dress wrapped around her. Their attention turns to her easily as she comes to stand in front of them

“Mommy, Daddy look! I made breakfast!” Kara smiled presenting two little dishes of plastic food for them to take. Keith without missing a beat grabs one. Pidge follows his lead grabbing the other.

“Looks great,” Pidge commented picking up the fake burger, definitely not breakfast but it seemed to make the kid happy.

Kara, satisfied, looks around the kitchen noticing the lack of food. “I thought you were making pancakes.”

Keith scoops her up in his arms trying to chase away the oncoming pout. “I know you wanted pancakes but I think cereal will have to do today.”

“Lucky Charms!” Kara screamed pointing to the box on top of the fridge.

“Pidge?” Keith asked gesturing towards the box.

“Alright, alright.”

Pidge walked over to the fridge and stood on her tippy toes to just grab the box. She turns around with a smile to the cheers of Kara.

It felt nice being with both Keith and Kara, *almost like a family*, Pidge thought absently. She was starting to get used to it.

Thanks for reading!

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